

made on the 8th in which 30 more Jap planes were destroyed.

Again on 10 July, Task Force 38 - described by correspondents as the "greatest mass of sea power ever assembled" - employed more than 1000 carrier planes to hit the Tokyo Area again. Results - 111 Jap planes destroyed, 231 damaged - with the loss of only 10 of our planes.

On 14-15 July, Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet joined by a British Task Force pounded the enemy homeland from northern Hokkaido to Tokyo with complete tactical surprise. Our carrier planes attacked airfields and shipping while our surface units bombarded important industrial towns. It is interesting to note that in this engagement, radio silence was broken, and Admiral Nimitz provided a blow-by-blow account of the battles. Results: Enemy losses - 140 ships and small craft sunk, 234 damaged; 84 locomotives destroyed, 45 damaged; 37 planes destroyed, 45 damaged; several industrial targets severely damaged. Our losses - 24 planes. On the 17th and 18th our surface forces bombarded northern Honshu and our planes attacked harbor installations with still further serious damage to Jap industrial plants.

On the 18th the Third Fleet turned its attention to knock out the remnants of the once mighty Japanese Fleet. The first attack was on the base at Yokosuka where our carrier planes hit the BB *YAGATO*, which you passed on your way to liberty in Yokosuka, and several small units were sunk or damaged; and in the Tokyo area 30 enemy planes were destroyed and 42 damaged. Our loss in this engagement was 12 planes. At night our surface units bombarded radio, radar, and other military installations.

The carrier force attacks on Kure Naval Base on 24-25 July and on remaining naval units in Inland Sea Area on the 28th, collected what may be considered the final installment of the debt owed to the Japanese for their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. Results: Sunk or damaged beyond repair 3 BB's, 3 CA's, 1 CL, 1 CV, 1 CVE and 5 DD's; damaged 51 naval units, including battleships, carriers, cruisers and destroyers; numerous merchant vessels destroyed; 242 enemy planes destroyed. Our losses were 59 planes.

Throughout the end of July our surface units continued to bombard industrial areas along the coast and our carrier force again attacked the Tokyo area on 30-31 July, sinking 24 ships, damaging 103, and destroying or damaging 276 planes. On the 30th, the USS *INDIANAPOLIS* was sunk in the Philippine Sea after delivering atomic bomb material to Guam.

Along with the devastating raids of the Third Fleet carrier planes in August, on the already beaten Japan, which had in July requested generous peace terms through Russia, came the atomic bombing on Hiroshima on 6 August and Russia's declaration of war on Japan on 9 August. Japan knew the game was up and on the 10th the Tokyo radio broadcast the surrender proposal in English to America - willing to accept the unconditional surrender terms issued at Potsdam. On the 11th the Allies replied to the Japanese peace offer and late on the 14th (in the states) the Japanese acceptance of unconditional surrender reached our State Department. During this period the carrier force still reamed up and down the coastal areas of Japan striking airfields and shipping in Honshu.

On the morning of the 15th the "cease fire" orders were flashed to the Pacific Fleet. Our carrier planes which were approaching targets in the Tokyo Area jettisoned their bombs and returned to their carriers. Strike C-2 from the *BENNINGTON* was almost over its target - the Tokyo Electric Plant.

While part of the Third Fleet was anchored in Tokyo Bay and the carrier task force was steaming off the entrance of the Bay, Japan formally capitulated to the Allies at 0900 on the morning of September 2nd in a brief but solemn ceremony aboard the US Battleship *MISKURI*, flying the flag of first Fleet Admiral Nimitz and then General of the Army MacArthur. Twelve signatures requiring only a few minutes to inscribe on the articles of surrender, brought to an end the Pacific War which had entered its eighth year in China, and for all the other Allied powers except the Soviet Union was approaching its fourth anniversary.